

You Have to Let Go

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/34202131) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/34202131>.

Rating:	Mature
Archive Warning:	Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Categories:	Gen , M/M
Fandom:	Teen Wolf (TV)
Relationships:	Derek Hale/Stiles Stilinski , Peter Hale & Stiles Stilinski
Characters:	Derek Hale , Stiles Stilinski , Peter Hale
Additional Tags:	Whumptober 2021 , Pining , Captivity , Angst , Werewolf Hunters , Beta Derek Hale , Beta Peter Hale , Hurt No Comfort
Language:	English
Series:	Part 1 of Whumptober 2021
Stats:	Published: 2021-10-01 Words: 1,977 Chapters: 1/1

You Have to Let Go

by [Hisvoicebrokemyheart](#)

Summary

Derek was missing. It didn't matter that Stiles hadn't seen him in years — he couldn't find him.

Notes

Happy Whumptober my friends!! This will be a multifandom experience on my end so I hope you enjoy the prompts I've chosen to fill throughout the month :) — series will update as the month goes on.

Derek was missing. Stiles hadn't heard from him in over a year, but that didn't stop him from keeping tabs on the guy. Really, he tried to have feelers out on all the Hales at any one time.

Cora went back to South America after a short stint in Beacon Hills with Derek. She found a solid pack of born wolves there and hadn't really moved around much since. He lost track of Peter for a while, it was infinitely harder to keep track of someone that was supposed to be dead.

When he found signs of Derek on the border of Washington and Oregon it didn't take him much longer to realize that he and Peter were living together.

Finding Derek was like a breath of fresh air and a punch in the gut at the same time. He deserved peace, and Stiles was happy to see that he may have found some. They were registered as allies of the local pack. A little bit of digging told Stiles that they sought permission to reside in their territory, but never submitted to the alpha.

It hurt in the beginning, knowing how close Derek was. Stiles moved to San Francisco full time during his second year of college. When he graduated high school he had a blowout with Scott. He never wanted to be an emissary. Scott and Deaton wouldn't have it otherwise. The change in dynamic had him feeling like something was missing. He wondered if it was what omegas felt like.

As strange as it was to admit, he didn't really miss Scott. He missed who Scott was, but he was happy to leave behind the person he turned into. Sometimes when that hollow feeling flared up in his chest he would think about what it would be like to be a part of Derek's pack again. Even without his alpha status, Stiles thought it might be nice.

Losing track of Derek nearly put him into a panic. He didn't check on the Hales every day, but he dedicated time for seasonal intentions. Their safety was always included in that practice. He'd forged his own long distance bonds with them, and focused on channeling energy from his surrounding environment to fuel that fragile line of connection.

Peter was still there, but when he reached for Derek it was as if he'd never found him in the first place. Less than 24 hours after that discovery Stiles was on his way to Salem. He used the dean's emergency contact information and bought himself five days of excused absences on the claim of a family emergency cross country.

When he made his way to their doorstep he didn't bother knocking.

"Peter, I know you're in there."

When he finally opened the door, Stiles could argue that he'd never looked worse — and he'd seen him dead, twice. Peter's hair was sticking up in every direction, and his eyes were bloodshot. The blinding blue of his beta shift was creeping in at the edge of his iris.

"I knew you were coming. I could feel you."

Even his voice was ragged. He ushered Stiles inside and locked the door behind him.

“You’ve been keeping tabs on us, all of us.”

All of a sudden Stiles felt sheepish. He couldn’t help but feel a little embarrassed about the callout.

“I’m sorry—”

“Don’t be.” Peter stopped him. “It was nice knowing that someone was out there that felt *good*. We were never certain, but Derek always liked to think that it was you.”

Peter was facing away from him. He’d walked through to the back of the house and stopped in front of a large bay window that looked over a small yard.

“Where is he?”

Stiles could barely ask. He could feel the dread rolling off of Peter in waves.

“Finding him isn’t the problem. I knew where he was within hours of him being gone. I can’t get him out.”

He didn’t like where this was going.

“What is that supposed to mean?”

“He’s in a hunter compound.”

Stiles’ stomach dropped. No wonder Peter couldn’t get him out alone, he would be putting himself at a major risk.

“Their wards stretch at least a square mile around the place. I’ve gotten through a few of them, but I haven’t been able to get eyes on any sort of camp.”

“How long have they had him?”

His mind was already turning with spells and wards of his own that may get him closer than Peter could. One of the first things he set to master was a cloaking spell. Stiles wanted to keep his past where it belonged, and dampening the projection of his magic was the first step. He only hoped that it would be enough.

“By tomorrow? A month.”

“Fuck.”

...

It didn’t take much for Peter to convince Stiles to stay the night. With no more than a few words spoken between them Peter corralled Stiles into a room nearly bursting at the seams with a king bed. Even Stiles could catch Derek’s scent all over the room, and when he laid down the fullness of it was nearly suffocating.

Peter slipped in beside him, and Stiles turned on his side to face him. After a brief moment of hesitation, he moved in to press his face against Peter's shoulder. He fisted his hands in his own shirt.

"Is this always what it feels like?" Stiles asked, voicing his curiosities. He wanted to claw through his shirt to get at his chest, to cut out the ache. He struggled to separate the feeling of being cast out and the fear of losing Derek.

"Always."

The finality in Peter's voice spoke of his own pain. A man living his third life, a gift and a curse. Across all three he'd lost nearly everything — his family, his sanity, his pack. Derek was his last chance.

Waking the next morning was a slow, quiet thing. Both men feeling some of the weight they bear between them come free.

Stiles worked through the whole day, into the late afternoon. He would set out in the midst of sunset and hopefully find signs of the compound as night fell.

They knew it was unlikely to get Derek out that night, and made peace with that knowledge. Peter would have known if Derek was killed, and if they hadn't done it yet they must want him for something else.

Stiles needed information. They had no idea what they were truly up against.

Peter dropped him off on the side of the road lined with a thick forest of pine. If he didn't know any better he would think he was being abandoned, but Peter said he would bring him to a spot where the wards were closest to the compound.

Crossing the wards was easy. Hunters were always expecting werewolves, never humans. They were funny like that.

Stiles had taken a draught with his lunch that dampened his magic. The hope was that it was enough to get him to the compound, it had been a long time since he felt so human.

The sight of the camp itself stopped him dead in his tracks.

There was a cabin in the center of the clearing. There was always a cabin. It wasn't overly large. He imagined that there couldn't be more than five or six personnel stationed there at any one time.

Beside it was a cage large enough to resemble a prison yard. When he came up to it he pressed his hands up against the wrought iron bars and could feel the spark of a defense charm. He looked further and saw that the cage was subdivided like an animal shelter. There were eight stalls in total and when Stiles looked up he saw that the very top was wrapped in thick barbed wire — a prison yard indeed.

His heart pounded in his chest and there was no movement in response. He could see the shadowed forms of people cowering away from the edges. Some of the stalls held more than

one person, their limbs tangled in some attempt at contact and comfort.

Stiles worked his way around the perimeter of the cage and stopped on the far side. He found Derek alone in the corner unit with a threadbare blanket wrapped tight around his shoulders, looking smaller than he'd ever seen him. Stiles was surely close enough to hear and definitely close enough to smell. Derek didn't move a muscle.

"Derek!" Stiles yelled under his breath, maybe he was sleeping.

The beta's head snapped up, completely caught off guard. He wrestled with the blanket and came to stand at the very edge of his cell. His hands came up to grab at the bars, pressing himself close.

"Stiles," Derek sounded bewildered, out of breath. "Is that really you?"

Stiles left his words unanswered, stepping closer to get a better look. He gasped at the sight of him. Every bit of bare skin exposed to the elements showed the black veins that screamed of wolfsbane poisoning. A chill ran over Stiles as he looked at Derek's face. The toxic lines were like spiderwebs creeping in and out of his facial hair.

"God, what are they doing to you?"

"They've been dosing us with low grade injections of wolfsbane ever since I got here. Whatever concentration they're using wears off just enough overnight that they can administer it all over again in the morning. I couldn't even hear you coming, maybe in a few hours I would have."

And there was the answer as to why Derek didn't make an escape attempt of his own. They were keeping him weak. He was being stripped of senses he had his entire life.

"I don't know if there's a way out of this."

"Derek, come on. You can't mean that." Stiles grabbed onto the bars beside Derek's, his desperation pouring out in the words.

"You're lucky you came when you did. By sunrise the number of guards triples. They send in a team of researchers to run tests on us for hours. Stiles, it runs so much deeper than even I can figure out. They're--"

"--trying to make you human."

Tears welled in Stiles' eyes at the realization. These people made Gerard Argent look like a saint.

Derek reached through the bars. He held Stiles' head between his hands and swiped at the tears that spilled free with his thumb. Stiles leaned into the touch, eyes closing.

“Peter is lucky to be alive. They talked about him for weeks after they realized their wards were tripped. Keep him safe.”

He rested his head against the wall between them.

“You can’t be serious!”

Stiles pressed himself fully against the cell, his head mirrored Derek’s. He could feel the heat of Derek’s breath across his lips.

“Listen to me. This isn’t something you and Peter can brute force. This isn’t Gerard or Kate rebelling against the code.” He voiced Stiles’ own fears.

“These people have the full weight of the hunter’s council behind them. This is their swan song. They tell me I should be thankful for what they’re trying to achieve.”

“There has to be something else. We’ll go to the Salem pack, Portland even. They have to have the numbers. Derek, I’ll go back to Chris and beg him to help me. I would do that for you.”

Derek pressed in then, cold metal biting into the delicate skin. Their lips brushed in a phantom kiss and the feeling of it ripped a harsh whine from Stiles.

“It’s funny — I can feel you Stiles, even now. I know you’ve been watching out for us. Just knowing that is enough for me. I feel you all the time. *You have to let me go.*”

“Don’t you get it?” Stiles’ laugh was filled with disdain. “I can’t.”

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!